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Council is not reckoned as one? Laurentius Sarius, a very learned man in Roman councils, says—"No one of sound mind can doubt that this Lateran Synod which follows was distinguished among the chief, and truly oecumenical. As being one in which the affairs of religion were treated of with the greatest concord of the Greek and Latin Church, at which were present the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, and SEVENTY archbishops, as well Latin as Greek, four hundred and twelve bishops, more than eight hundred abbots and priors—all the prelates, together, TWELVE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN, or more."* And the canon law itself pronounces this a general council, as we shall see presently.

If this were not a general Roman council, what was?

Now let us see what this council did. They passed 70 canons. The first is—"de fide Catholica"—a confession of faith. The second is the condemnation of the doctrine of the Abbot Joachim. The third, about heretics, &c., &c. All passed by the same authority.

Now, let any Protestant only say, in our pages, that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was never decreed by any general council of the Roman Church before the Council of Trent, and then we should have a host of correspondents exclaiming against such ignorance, and pointing to the first canon of this very Council of Lateran, as the solemn decision of a general council in favour of Transubstantiation. We should admit that Roman Catholics are correct in giving such an answer. But when we then quote the 3rd canon of this very same council, as containing the decision of a Roman general council about heretics, what right have Roman Catholics, then, to turn round on us and say, that it is not a decree of a general council?

We can, however, prove, against them, that it is. We prove it from their own canon law. The Roman canonists of the present century lay it down that, whatever is in the decretals of Pope Gregory IX., is the law of the Church of Rome.†

Now, we turn to those decretals—Lib. v., Tit. vii., c. 13—and there we find this 3rd canon of the fourth Council of Lateran, and we find this heading to it—

"IDEM—viz., INNOCENT III.—IN CONCILIO GENERALI."

Thus the canon law itself declares this very canon to have been passed by a Pope in a general council.

Our readers will now like to see some extracts from this canon—"We excommunicate and anathematize EVERY HERESY which exalts itself against this holy, orthodox, and Catholic faith which we have expounded above; condemning all heretics, by whatever names they may be censured.

Let the secular powers be admonished, and induced, and, if necessary, let them be compelled by ecclesiastical censures, whatever offices they fill, that as they desire to be reputed and counted faithful, they publicly take an oath for the defence of the faith; that in sincerity, to the utmost of their strength, they will apply themselves to exterminate all heretics denounced by the Church.

But if the temporal lord, having been required and warned by the Church, shall have neglected to purge his land from this heretical foulness, let him be bound with the chain of excommunication, by the metropolitan and the other provincial bishops; and if he shall have despised to make satisfaction within a year, let this be signified to the supreme Pontiff, that he (the Pope) may pronounce the vassals (or subjects) thenceforward absolved from their allegiance, and may expose his land to be seized by the Catholics, who shall possess it without any contradiction, the heretics being exterminated, and shall preserve it in purity of faith.‡

There is not one word in the whole canon about civil crimes. It is directed against "every heresy," and "all heretics." It is for "purity of faith," not for civil welfare. It is the Church compelling the civil power, by ecclesiastical censures, to persecute heretics.

Now let us see what Bishop Milner has to say in answer to this.

First, he speaks of the authority by which this decree was passed. "It must first be observed," he says, "who, were present at this council, and by whose authority these decrees of a temporal nature were passed. There were then present, besides the Pope and the bishops, either in person or by their ambassadors, the Greek and the Latin Emperors, the Kings of England, France, Hungary, the Sicilies, Arragon, Cyprus, and Jerusalem; and the representatives of a vast many other principalities and states; so that, in fact, this council was a congress of Christendom,

temporal as well as spiritual."—End of Controversy, letter 49.

Who, on reading this, does not think that this Council of Lateran was quite different in its constitution from the general councils of the Church of Rome—that it was, in fact, more of the nature of a Congress of the princes of Europe to settle the temporal affairs of Europe; and that for infallible decrees of the Church we must rather look to the purely spiritual councils of the Church?

Bishop Milner, it is true, does not say all this; but it was obviously what people would think on reading what he said, and that was just what the crafty bishop wished. The bishop knew as well as we do, that there never was a general council of the Church of Rome to which the princes of Europe were not summoned precisely as they were to this Council of Lateran. He knew that all the princes of Europe (Roman Catholic) were represented in the Council of Trent itself, precisely as they were in this Council of Lateran. But then he hoped that his readers would not know all this, and so wrote in a way that would lead them to think that this Lateran Council was an assembly of a quite different nature from the general councils, which are supposed to speak the sense of the Church. It is an instance of the disingenuous artifice by which this writer is always ready to take advantage of the ignorance of his readers. But such artifices are never used by clever men, except when they are conscious that their cause is bad, and that truth is against them.

And did Bishop Milner really suppose that in the Church of Rome ecclesiastical censures emanate from the princes and not from the bishops?

Second, Bishop Milner says—"The decree of the council regarded only the prevailing heretics of that time." But we have given the very words of the decree above—"Every heresy," "all heretics, by whatever names they may be censured," "all heretics denounced by the Church."

Is there one word here to confine the canon to heretics guilty of crimes? Does it not expressly speak of "ALL heretics?" Is there one word to confine it to the heretics of that time? If that were its meaning, why did Pope Gregory IX., twenty years after, embody it into a code of laws intended for all future ages—a code still held at Rome as being the law of the Church?

The fact is clear. A general council of the Church of Rome, with a Pope at its head, has made a decree in a point of morals, which all Roman Catholics now see was wrong; but they think it still necessary to maintain that a general council, with a Pope at its head, cannot go wrong, either in faith or morals. And so they are driven to every shift and evasion to try and get rid of this decree, against the plainest evidence of its authority and meaning. Let them not be content with such wretched shifts where God's truth and the salvation of their own souls are the things to be sought for. Let them confess that a Pope and a general council have erred against morals in this decree, and then they will be in a position to inquire, like honest men, whether a Pope and a general council have ever erred in a question of faith.

If our correspondent will tell us what work of Dr. Dixon's he refers to, we will attend to it.

ON BRUCIOLI'S BIBLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—Permit me to notice, for the benefit of your inquiring Roman Catholic readers, a letter, signed William Murphy, in the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, of Jan., 1854, p. 11, wherein the Bible translated by A. Brucioli is offered as evidence that "in every Catholic (Roman) country the circulation of the Scriptures is encouraged." You, sir, have had frequent occasion to complain that Roman Catholics too much rely on second-hand evidence, and on arguments long since refuted; but, perhaps, the enlistment of A. Brucioli's Bible as creditable to the Church of Rome, affords the most notable example. Cardinal Wiseman, twenty years ago, referred to the same Bible, with similar purpose, in his Moorfield lectures, which called forth the admirable "letters" to Dr. Wiseman, by the late Vicar of Blackburn, Dr. Whittaker, wherein he says—"In the account you give of Brucioli's Bible there is not one particle of truth, with the exception of the date of the editio princeps. I am convinced that you never saw the book, and must have taken your account of this distinguished individual on very bad second-hand authority."—p. 175.

Dr. Whittaker in proof states that Antonio Brucioli was compelled to fly from Florence, and, with some risk, saved his life, having fallen under the suspicion of heresy. That (according to Dr. McCre, in his "History of the Suppression of the Reformation in Italy," pp. 55, 56) Brucioli's Bible was ranked among prohibited books of the first class in the index of the Council of Trent. The Spanish index, then, before Dr. Whittaker, also holds it in the same class. That Brucioli's Bible was published "con privilegio de lo inculto Senata Veneto," and without any Roman authority whatever. Lastly, that the pictorial illustrations heading the 13th and 17th chapters of the Apocalypse, exhibit respectively a ferocious "beast" and the well-known impure female, described in the text as "madre de la fornicatione," each wearing the triple crown! the papal tiara!

I have myself seen Antonio Brucioli's Bible in Dr. Whittaker's library, and specially examined those boldly executed and instructive wood-cuts. Should Mr. William Murphy and his informant, the Editor of the *Weekly Telegraph*, only view the same, an indulgence which the Dublin libraries could no doubt afford, they will gladly withdraw their statement that "there was another (Italian version) by A. Brucioli (sic) in 1523 (1532), and that is promoted by all means within the command of the Church, of Popes, of cardinals, &c., &c."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
EDWARD M. HEARN.

Hurst-green Parsonage,
January 27, 1855.

WHAT DOES ST. PETER SAY ABOUT THE POPE?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—I have read with great interest the correspondence of Mr. Rourke in the columns of the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, and am happy to congratulate the members of the Roman and Protestant Churches on the auspicious circumstance of the truth being argumentatively contended for by the laity of both communities.

Priestcraft is but the working of ambition in the breasts and minds of unregenerate clergymen, who, excluded from its pursuits in the secular affairs of life, aim at the most fearful despotism that can be exercised over their fellow men, by means of that dark influence which is brought to bear upon spiritual hopes and fears in time and for eternity, and this craft succeeds only in proportion to the people's ignorance of the word of God, and their acceptance of other standards for their faith and practice; the true minister of the Gospel (Mark ix. 33 to 40. Hebrews viii. 1 to 6) does not seek to be a lord over God's heritage; he knows that he has authority in the Church only as it is committed to him, according to the revelations contained in Holy Scripture, and he makes no claim upon belief or submission of the judgment, for which he cannot appeal to the law and to the testimony of his God.

This world is the field in which wheat and tares are growing together till the harvest shall come, and wherever there is a priesthood or a ministry, there lurks in the hearts of the unconverted members of either body that proud spirit that would reign over men upon the earth and attain the glory of its kingdoms. The common safeguard against the most cruel of all tyrannies, lies in our capability of judging the pretensions that are put forth, and examining every ground of authority upon which they are asserted; looking no further than to secondary causes, we can see that it was the exercise of this right of judgment in a limited degree, that led to the comparative independence of the Gallican portion of the Church of Rome, and to the differences that have existed, not only between Jansenists and Jesuits, but between other more nearly accordant brotherhoods in the Papal system; it is the exercise of this right, ever under strictly-imposed limitations, that marks the distinction between the ultramontane and the more reasonable part of the subjects of the Roman see, and keeps alive whatever semblance of spiritual liberty they are either of them permitted to enjoy; it is the exercise of this right which, so far as it is properly carried out in every Church, operates as a check upon the ambition which is in man's fallen nature, whether that nature be clothed in priestly vestments or a layman's garb.

Now, sir, the Church of Rome makes high claims for its priesthood, and asserts that from them, and them only, the laity are to receive the dogmatic teaching of religion. Will Mr. Rourke kindly undertake to prove, for the benefit of every inquiring mind, from the inspired Epistles of St. Peter as his text, and the rest of Scripture for his corroborations—first, that the claims of the Pope and priesthood are right and true; and, secondly, that the dogmas which are exclusively Papal or Roman are in accordance with the sacred writings of the Apostle from whom the hierarchy of his Church claims descent? I ask this favour in all courtesy, and think that if he will accede to my request, he may, under God's blessing, either convince others of what is the truth, or elicit such arguments from you as may lead many to the knowledge of it as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A.

THE ADVANTAGE OF HAVING AN INFALLIBLE GUIDE: IN WHAT DOES IT CONSIST?

SIR—There is nothing the importance of which the Church of Rome dwells more upon than divine faith—by divine faith she means, not what we call a practical living, or sanctifying faith, but a faith which is unwavering, because built upon the testimony of a witness known to be infallible; all else she calls human faith, reasonings, and guesses, and she utterly despises it. Now, there are two questions, to decide which, she maintains the necessity of such an infallible authority. First, is the Bible the Word of God? And, secondly, what is the meaning of its written message? She would enforce upon men this dogma, that their faith, as to these two points, must be built on infallible authority; or else, it is no true faith, nor of any value at all. I will take these two questions separately.

* Labbe & Cossart, vol. xi., p. 238.

† Quidquid legitur in iis comprehenditur, legem facit. Devoti, Jus Canonum. Vol. i., 379. Rome, 1837.

‡ Excommunicamus et anathematizamus, omnem heresim extolentem se adversus hanc sanctam, orthodoxam, Catholicam fidem, quam superius exposuimus, condemnantes universos hereticos, quibuscumque nominibus censeantur. . . . Moneantur autem, et inducantur, et si necesse fuerit, per censuram ecclesiasticam compellantur seculares potestates, quibuscumque fungantur officiis, ut sicut reputari cupiunt et haberi fideles, ita pro defensione fidei præstent publicum juramentum, quod de terris sue jurisdictionis subjectis universos hereticos ab ecclesia denotatos bona fide pro viribus exterminare studebunt. . . . Si vero Dominus temporalis requisitus et monitus ab ecclesia, terram suam purgare neglexerit ab hac heretica fedestate, per metropolitanum et ceteros comprovinciales episcopos excommunicationis vinculo innodetur. Et si satisfecere contempserit infra annum, significetur hoc summo Pontifici; ut ex tunc ipse vassallos ab ejus fedestate denunciet absolutos, et terram exponat Catholicis occupandam, qui eam, exterminatis hereticis, sine ulla contradictione possideant, et in fidei puritate conservent. . . .

—Labbe and Cossart, vol. ix., 148.